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TALES



REPRINT
EDITION

NO. 24

FROM THE

CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPTID



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



ELBSTER

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! I SEE YOU GOT UP ENOUGH NERVE TO BUY *TALKS FROM THE CRYPT* AGAIN! WELL, I WON'T DRAGON! YOU'LL GET YOUR FAIR SHARE OF SHAKES AND SHIVERS, BELIEVE ME! PEACH TO BEGIN! GOOD! NOW LIE BACK ON THE MARBLE SLAB, PULL THE SHEET UP OVER YOUR HEAD, AND I'LL TELL YOU THE FIRST STORY! IT'S HARRY GORDON'S STORY, TOLD IN *His OWN WORDS!*" HE CALLS IT.

BATS IN MY BELFRY!



NOT ANYTHING
CAN BE DONE
FOR YOU! THERE'S
NO OPERATION!

I SEE! WELL
... THANK YOU
FOR EVERYTHING!
DOCTOR!



I WENT HOME TO MY WIFE JOAN! I
TOLD HER WHAT THE DOCTOR HAD
SAID...

YOU... YOU MEAN
YOU WON'T BE
ABLE TO ACT
ANYMORE?

HOW COULD
IT TO MISS MY
VOICE?
EXPRESSION
WOULD BE LOST!



THERE MUST BE
SOME FOLKS THEY
CAN DO! SO I SEE
SPECIALISTS?
WAKE UP!

I WILL, DEAR!
I WILL...



BUT EVERY DOCTOR I WENT TO TOLD ME THE SAME
STORY! IT WAS USELESS! WHEN I STARTED TO MISS
OUR DARTS...

SORRY, HARRY! WE'LL
HAVE TO GET ANOTHER
STAIN!

HUNT! WHAT DID YOU
SAY?



AND THEN IT CAME! THE THICK, HEAVY SILENCE! I
WAS STONE DEAF! I WALKED IN A WORLD OF STILL-
NESS! THE TRAFFIC, THE CROWDS, THE ORCHESTRA
IN MY DREAMS... ALL SILENT! I HAD TO LEARN TO
LIP-READ TO UNDERSTAND WHAT JOAN SAID TO ME...

I SAID OUR HOME'S PRACTICALLY
BONE! UNDERSTAND? WE'RE
ALMOST DONE... BONE...
CLEANED OUT!

YES, JOAN...



THINGS GOT WORSE! I TRIED TO FIND WORK, BUT I COULDN'T
DO ANYTHING! ACTING WAS ALL I KNEW! THEN I THOUGHT
OF AN OLD FRIEND, JOHN BAYNE! JOHN AND I HAD PLAYED
SUMMER STOCK TOGETHER! THEN JOHN HAD SOME BLIND!
I WENT TO SEE HIM...

WELL, WELL, HARRY GORDON!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU!

DID... DID YOU SAY MY
NAME, JOHN? I... I'M
DEAF! I CAN'T HEAR
YOU! DID YOU SAY MY
NAME?



OF COURSE! I RECOGNIZED
YOU IMMEDIATELY!

YOU CAN SEE?
THEN WHY DO YOU
WEAR DARK
GLASSES?



WILLIAM M. WALKER

TO HIDE MY EYES? "GOOD LORD!"
THESE EYES?



JOHN'S EYES GLARED YELLOW IN
THE DIM LIGHT OF HIS ROOM. THEY
WERE THE EYES OF A CAT.

WHAT...WHAT DID
YOU DO TO
YOURSELF?
YOUR EYES...



YES? THEY'RE CAT'S
EYES! BUT HOW
DARE YOU, MURDERER!
I CAN SEE!



I HAD DIFFICULTY READING JOHN'S
LIPS, BUT I MANAGED TO UNDERSTAND
ENOUGH OF WHAT HE SAID TO GET
THE WHOLE STORY...

I FOUND
OUT ABOUT HIM THROUGH
ANOTHER EX-BLIND MAN. HE'S
A DEAFMUT. HE OPERATED ON
ME! I GRAFTED THESE CAT'S
EYES! AND NOW, I CAN
SEE...



DO YOU THINK HE CAN HELP ME,
JOHN. RESTORE MY HEARING
THE SAME WAY?



WHY DON'T YOU GO
SEE HIM? I'LL GIVE
YOU HIS
ADDRESS...



THE SHOP WAS IN A DARK AND WINDING BACK STREET
IN THE SHABBIEST PART OF THE CITY. THERE WERE
STUFFED ANIMALS IN THE DIRT WINDOWS.



JOHN SAID HE WASN'T A
DOCTOR... BUT... THIS? THIS
LOOKS LIKE A DEAFMUTER'S
SHOP!

I WENT IN. A LITTLE BELL TINKLED BEHIND A CURTAINED
DOOR AT THE REAR OF THE SHOP. THE DOOR OF STAIN-
LESS AND CRIST HUNG HEAVILY ON THE AIR. HE CAME
FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN. HE WAS TALL AND DARK,
SLIMLY BUILT...

YOU...
YOU WERE RECOMMENDED...
BY A FRIEND? YOU... HELPED
HIM TO SEE AGAIN? I
WONDERED IF...



I SEE BY THE WAY
YOU WATCH MY LIPS
THAT YOU ARE DEAF?
COME INTO THE BACK?
I WILL EXAMINE YOU?



THE REAR OF THE SHOP LOOKED LIKE AN ALCHEMIST'S
HIGHTMARE. THERE WERE BOTTLES AND JARS OF
VARIOUS COLORED LIQUIDS AND POWDERS. OUT IN THE
CENTER OF THE ROOM WAS A MODERN-LOOKING OPERAT-
ING TABLE WITH UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT. HE EXAMINED
ME BRIEFLY...



YOUR AUDITORY NERVES ARE
PARALYZED! I WILL HAVE TO REPLACE
YOUR WHOLE HEARING SYSTEM
WITH SOMETHING DIFFERENT...

WHAT DO YOU HAVE
IN MIND?

I PROPOSE TRANSFER-
RING THE AUDITORY
SYSTEM OF A RAT INTO
YOUR BODY...



A RAT?

TEST THE RAT'S AUDITORY SYSTEM IS **IMPOSED?**
IT IS **EXTRA-SENSITIVE!** IF THE OPERATION IS A
SUCCESS, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO **HEAR BETTER**
THAN YOU DID **BEFORE** YOU LOST YOUR HEARING.



I **AGREED** TO THE OPERATION! AFTER
ALL... WHAT DID I HAVE TO LOSE?

BREATHE DEEP, MR. GORDON!



WHEN I CAME OUT OF THE ANES-
THETIC, I LOOKED ABOUT! HE WAS
STANDING OVER ME! HE STARTED
TO SPEAK...

MY HEAD! **DON'T TALK!**
HOW DO YOU FEEL?



HIS VOICE SLAMMED INTO MY SPIRIT!
IT WAS HARSH AND LOUD...

YOU'LL GET USED
TO IT, MR. GORDON!

I... I
CERTAINLY
HOPE SO!



CAN YOU IMAGINE THE SENSATION? HAVE YOU EVER
TURNED A RADIO UP **FOUL BLAST?** THAT'S WHAT
EVERYTHING SOUNDED LIKE TO ME AS I MADE MY
WAY HOME! WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR I HEARD JOAN'S
VOICE! SHE WAS UPSTAIRS ON THE PHONE...

IS THERE HE JUST CAME IN? I'LL
HAVE TO RUN UP NOW, CARLINE!
SCOOBY, DEAREST? YES... OF
COURSE I LOVE YOU!



I COULDN'T **BELIEVE** IT! JOAN... AND ANOTHER
JOAN? I DECIDED **NOT** TO TELL JOAN ABOUT MY GOOD
FORTUNE... ABOUT MY HEARING BEING RESTORED! I
WANTED TO WAIT... TO FIND OUT MORE! THAT NIGHT,
I COULDN'T SLEEP! I GOT DRESSED AND WENT FOR
A WALK...

FUNNY! I HAVE THE
STRANGEST FEELING...
LIKE I WANT TO
SCREAM...



I GUESS I WALKED ALL NIGHT! WHEN I RETURNED, JOAN WRO-GONE! SHE HAD GOTTEN A JOB SINCE I LOST MY HEARING AND MUST HAVE LEFT EARLY THAT MORNING...



A HEAVY DROWSINESS CAME OVER ME? I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP... BUT WHEN I WOKED



I SLEPT TO THE FLOOR! I WAS IN A CLOSET! I HAD FALLEN ASLEEP HANGING UPSIDE DOWN FROM THE CLOTHES POLE



I STUMBLED INTO THE BATHROOM AND LOOKED AT MYSELF IN THE MIRROR? I NEEDED A SHAVE EARLY, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE



I WAS FRIGHTENED? I SHOWN CAREFULLY CLEAVING MY FACE OF THE NIGHT? THEN I STEPPED INTO THE SHOWER? AS I WASHED MY AM TO DEEP SLEEP IT



I DRESSED QUICKLY AND RUSHED TO MY FRIEND JOHN'S HOUSE... JOHN WHO HAD FIRST RECOGNIZED THE STRANGE SHOP WITH ITS STILL STRANGER PROPRIETARY? IT WAS GETTING DARK OUTSIDE? I SLUNG IN HIS DOOR WITHOUT KNOWING...



HIS ROOM WAS DARKLY LIT? HIS FELINE EYES GLOWED WITH AN EERIE YELLOW LIGHT? HE LAY IN A CORNER, WHITE, PICKED-CLEAN, BORED ABOUT WHAT HIS FACE WAS COVERED WITH A DARK-BLACK FUR.



IT'S THAT HORRIBLE POND! HE... HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO ME! THESE AREN'T CAT'S EYES HE'S GIVEN ME! THEY'RE THE EYES OF A PANTHER! AND... I CAN'T HELP MYSELF! I... I HAVE AN URGENT LINE TO... *CALL!*

LOVE
HELP
US!

JOHN CLAPPED ON A LIGHT...

LOOK AT ME! LOOK! I'M EVEN BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE A PANTHER! DON'T GO TO HIM, HARRY! DON'T!

IT'S TOO
LATE, JOHN!
IT'S TOO
LATE!

JOHN SMILED! HIS EYES SHINED! I GOT OUT! I BEGAN TO WALK...

THAT EXPLAINS MY FALLING ASLEEP HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE CLOSET... THE SEET HAIR ON MY FACE... THE MEMORANDUM GROWING ACROSS MY ARMPITS! I... I'M TURNING INTO A BAT!

AND THAT NIGHT, AS I WALKED THROUGH THE BLACKNESS, I BEGAN TO UTTER SHORT SHRIIL SHRIERS! AND I LISTENED FOR THE SHRIERS TO ECHO BACK! I WAS USING THE BAT'S RADAR-LIKE DEVICE FOR TRAVELING THROUGH THE DARKNESS! WHEN DAWN CAME, I MADE MY WAY HOME...

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL NIGHT? CAN YOU UNDERSTAND MET WHY DID YOU STAY OUT ALL NIGHT?

I... I GOT A JOB, JOAN! NIGHT WORK!

GOOD! THEN I'LL GIVE MYNE... TODAY!

IF YOU LIKE, JOAN! I... I'M TIRED! I'M GOING TO BED!

SHE WENT OUT AND I LAY EXHAUSTED ON THE BED! AGAIN, I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP, BUT WHEN I AWOKED WAS HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE CLOSET! I HEARD VOICES... JOAN'S VOICE... AND A MAN'S...

HE CARRIED A LARGE INSURANCE POLICY, \$-BLOOD! HE TOOK IT OUT WHILE HE WAS AGING AND MAKING GOOD MONEY!

IS IT STILL IN EFFECT?

I LISTENED FROM MY LAIR IN THE CLOSET, I LISTENED...

YES! THE PREMIUM IS DUE NEXT MONTH!

WE'LL BE RIGHT AFTER WE KILL HIM.



I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EARS! THEY WERE PLANNING TO **KIDNAP** ME? I GOT DOWN FROM THE SLOTTED POLE AND SLOWLY OPENED THE DOOR...



I RUSHED DOWN THE STAIRS AND **BOOM!** THE DOOR BEFORE THEY COULD STOP ME.

IT WAS **HARRY!** HE MUST HAVE **HEARD** US! HE'LL GO TO THE POLICE!

I'LL **STOP** HIM... IF I HAVE TO...



JOAN'S LOVER CAME AFTER ME! THE SIDEWALKS WERE DARK AND DESERTED! I... **RAN...** OTHERS LITTLE SHRIEL HIGH-PITCHED SHRIERS! THEY NAMED ME OF FENSER, DEAD-END ALLEYS, AND BLIND STREETS...



HURRY! IT'S NO USE! I'LL GET YOU...

AS I RAN, I LOOKED DOWN! CLAMS SPRANG FROM MY FINGERS WHERE NAILS HAD STOPPED... AND WHEN I DO... **HARRY!**



I PULSED MY CLAMMED HAND OVER MY NOSE! IT WAS **HARRY!**... AND OVER MY LOWER LIP **HUSS!**

FANST! I'VE SHOWN FANST!

WHEN I GET YOU, **HARRY!** I'LL **KILL** YOU!



I STOPPED RUNNING! THERE WAS NO NEED TO RUN ANY LONGER! I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO! JOAN'S LOVER CAME UP TO ME, LEECHING! THEN, HIS EYES WIDENED IN HORROR! I SPRANG AT HIM...



NO... NO! KEEP AWAY!

HE LAY SPRAWLED BRUTALLY ON THE COBBLESTONES... WHITE AS CHALK! TWO PUNCTURES THICKER CLAVES ON HIS NECK! HE WAS DEAD! I HAD DRAINED HIS BLOOD...



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



HMPH! NOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DULY BORED BY THE GHOST-KEEPER'S FAIRY TALE, I'LL TELL YOU A HORROR STORY! COME CLOSER AND GAZE INTO THE SHUDDERING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON! GAZE DEEP AND SOON YOU'LL SEE THE FIRST SCENE OF A CHILLING TALE I CALL...

THE LIVING DEATH!

LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD WANNING HAD BEEN CLOSE FRIENDS ALL THROUGH THE YEARS AT MEDICAL SCHOOL. THEY HAD STUDIED TOGETHER AND GRADUATED TOGETHER! THEY HAD EVEN INFORMED TOGETHER AT THE SAME HOSPITAL! THEY HAD DONE EVERYTHING TOGETHER! AND, TOGETHER, THEY HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL.

EVEN LAUREN WAKE UP YOUR MIND! LESTER OR ME?

WHY NOT BOTH OF YOU?

SAY THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA! WE'LL BOTH TAKE HER TO THE MOVIES, ARNOLD!



YES! LESTER AND ARNOLD HAD BEGUN THEIR MEDICAL CAREERS TOGETHER! BUT SOON, THEY BEGAN TO DRIFT APART! THEY BEGAN TO DIFFER ON THEORIES OF MEDICINE.

I SAY THAT THE MAJORITY OF ILLNESSES ARE NOTHING BUT PRODUCTS OF THE MIND! THEY ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY INCURRED!

SAH! LESTER, YOU'RE MAD! AN ILLNESS IS AN ILLNESS AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH!



AND SO LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD MANNING CAME TO A CROSSROADS AND EACH WENT IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION! LESTER TOOK THE PATH OF PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES THROUGH THE MIND, WHILE ARNOLD TOOK THE PATH OF SURGERY... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES BY SCALPEL, NEEDLE, AND PILL!... THE GIRL THEY BOTH LOVED... STOOD BETWEEN THEM, TRYING TO MAKE UP HER MIND!



LAURIE AND LESTER BECAME ENGAGED THE MONTHS WENT BY AND THE WEDDING DAY DREW NEAR! ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE THE EVENTUAL DAY LAURIE BECAME VERY SICK! SHE WAS RUINED TO THE HOSPITAL...

HERE, LESTER! HERE ARE THE X-RAYS! LOOK FOR YOURSELF! SHE HAS A TUMOROUS GROWTH ON HER HEART! AN OPERATION MIGHT SAVE HER LIFE!

NIGHT, YOU SAY? WHAT ARE HER CHANCES, ARNOLD?



THEN, ONE DAY, ARNOLD MANNING, THE SURGEON, RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM LAURIE! HE WENT TO SEE HER...

I... I DON'T KNOW TO SAY THAT, ARNOLD. BUT, WELL... LESTER HAS ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM, AND I'VE ACCEPTED! I'M... GLAD!

OH! I FEEL WELL. I HOPE YOU'LL BOTH BE VERY HAPPY TOGETHER!



I... I CAN'T TELL, LESTER! MAYBE ONE CHANCE IN TEN! IT'S A VERY DELICATE OPERATION!

THEN I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO PERFORM IT! I'LL SAVE HER THROUGH PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE BY MYSELF! I'M SURE I CAN!



DON'T BE A FOOL, LESTER! SURGERY IS THE ONLY WAY! YOU CAN'T STOP A TUMOR THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY!

YES! IT'S POSSIBLE! BY HYPNOTISM I'LL REMOVE IT! AFTER ALL... GROWTH IS CONTROLLED BY THE BRAIN!



I'M IN CHARGE HERE, DOCTOR JEROME! THERE'S NO TIME FOR YOUR PSYCHOSOMATIC HOOD-WADD! LAURIE'S LIFE IS AT STAKE.

BUT YOU ADMITTED THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHANCE!



YES! BUT THERE'S STILL THAT CHANCE! I'M ORDERING THE OPERATION! I SHALL PERFORM IT MYSELF!

NO! GIVE ME A TRY! PLEASE!



BUT LESTER DIDN'T GET HIS CHANCE! THE HOSPITAL BOARD VOTED HIM DOWN, AND DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING PERFORMED THE OPERATION! HE DID HIS BEST, BUT



THE ONE DIED, LESTER?

OH I DROPPED NO!

I COULD HAVE SAVED HER! I COULD HAVE SAVED HER IF YOU HAD GIVEN ME THE CHANCE! YOU KILLED HER, MANNING! YOU AND YOUR SURGERY!



...I DID ALL I COULD, LESTER!

AND? YOU COULDN'T HAVE LISTENED TO ME! BUT NO! YOU'RE A SHAMELESS FOP-ATE FOUT! THAT'S ALL YOU KNOW!



WELL, I'LL DROP YOU, DOCTOR MANNING! SOMEDAY, I'LL CONVINCE YOU THAT I WAS RIGHT!

POORFOL, DOCTOR JEROME! PERHAPS, BUT I DOUBT IT!



AND SO THE YEARS PASSED! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING BECAME A WORLD FAMOUS SURGEON, WHILE DOCTOR LESTER JEROME REMAINED AN OSCURE PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIST.

DOO JEROME? I WOULDN'T GO TO HIM ON A JIFF! HE DON'T GIVE YOU FEELS OR NOTHING! JUST HYPNOTIZES YOU. PSYCHOANALYZES YOU.

THE BOY DUGHT TO BE PSYCHO-ANALYZED HIMSELF! HE'S NOTS!



ONE DAY, WHILE DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING WAS PERFORMING A ROUTINE OPERATION...



DOCTOR MANNING! WHAT IS IT?

O...EASEY...CAN'T SEE? EVERYTHING...IS BLURRED! TAKE OVER...DOCTOR...

DOCTOR MANNING SLUMPED TO THE FLOOR, UNCONSCIOUS. HIS ASSISTANT TOOK OVER WHILE THEY CARRIED DOCTOR MANNING OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM TO A HOSPITAL BED.



PUPILS DILATED. NO PAIN REACTION! GET HIM TO X-RAY...AT ONCE!

DOCTOR! YOU MEAN...



YES? IT LOOKS LIKE
A UFAIN TUMOR?

GIVE ME
X-RAY!
IMMEDIATELY!



SEVERAL HOURS LATER, DR. MARNIE
SHOWN CONSIDERABLE "WHICH HE
LOOKED AROUND.

YOU COLLAPSED
WHILE OPERATING.
DOCTOR? HOW DO
YOU FEEL?

I HAVE A
SEVERE HEAD-
ACHE? WHAT
WHAT'S AROUND
WITH ME?



HERE, DOCTOR MARNIE
DON'T LOOK AT THESE
X-RAYS!

DEFERRED
FAMILY?
FAMILY WERE
PRESSURE THE
MAN IS... IS...
NO!



YES, DOCTOR MARNIE! THERE
ARE THREE X-RAYS!

BUT, WITH A TUMOR
LIKE THAT, AN
IMMEDIATE OPERATION
IS IMPERATIVE ON
BLUE...



DEATH IN TWO MONTHS AT
THE MOST, DOCTOR MARNIE!

AND... ONE DRAINAGE IS
THE ONLY WAY THAT THE OPER-
ATION WILL SAVE MY
LIFE? AND... I'M THE
ONLY MAN THAT CAN
PERFORM IT?



HILL, HILL! THAT'D BE SOME FRACKIN' DEAR READER!
HEP' ARNOLD CERTAINLY WAS IN A HORRIBLE PREDIC-
AMENT.

DOCTOR MARNIE!
WHAT ABOUT DOCTOR
JEROME? BE GLASS
THAT A TUMOR GROWTH
CAN BE CONTROLLED BY...

NO! HE'S A MAD DOCTOR!
I... I'S RATHER... GULP...



HILL, HILL! I'M GET HIM, DEAR READER! HE'S RATHER
DUE. PRETTY STUBBORN WASN'T HE? WELL, HE
CHANGED HIS MIND. DOCTOR MARNIE THOUGHT IT
OVER REAL HARD...

WELL, WELL! THE FAMOUS SUR-
GEON, DOCTOR ARNOLD MARNIE,
AND TO WHAT DO I OWE THE
EXTREME PLEASURE...

I... I'M HERE
PROFESSIONALLY,
DOCTOR JEROME!

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME STOPPED ASIDE AND DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING ENTERED THE NEAT WHITE OFFICE! ONCE THERE, HE EXPLAINED TO DOCTOR JEROME THE REASON FOR HIS VISIT! DOCTOR LESTER JEROME LISTENED QUIETLY, AND THEN... WHEN DOCTOR MANNING HAD FINISHED... **NORSE** CUT LAUGHED!

SO! THE REPEATED DOCTOR MANNING TURNS TO **PERFECT SOMATIC MACHINERY** AS A LAST RESORT, EN? NOW, YOU RELUCTANTLY AGREE TO GIVE ME A CHANCE, LESTER, EN?

DO NOT LAUGH, LESTER!

WHY SHOULDN'T I LAUGH, ARNOLD? WHEN **LAURIE** STOOD BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, I WAS A **DOCTOR**... A **CHARLATAN!** BUT NOW WHEN YOUR LIFE IS AT STAKE... YOU COME RUNNING? WELL... I CANNOT REFUSE YOU! IN FACT, IT WILL GIVE ME GREAT PLEASURE TO **PROVE** THAT I AM CORRECT...



LESTER AND ARNOLD MANNING INTO A DIMLY LIT ROOM! HE DEATED HIM IN A COMFORTABLE CHAIR AND TRAINED A SPOTLIGHT ON HIS EYES...

WHAT... WHAT IF I SHOULD **DIE** WHILE UNDER YOUR HYPNOTIC TRANCE, LESTER?

YOU WILL NOT DIE, ARNOLD! I'LL SEE TO **THAT!**



SOON DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING'S EYES GREW HEAVY! UNDER THE SPELL OF DOCTOR LESTER'S SOFT BOOMING TONES, ARNOLD FELL INTO A DEEP HYPNOTIC SLEEP...

YOU WILL REMAIN IN THIS STATE UNTIL I UTTER THE WORD '**LAURIE**' UNDER... THEN YOU WILL AWAKE! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

I STAND.



AND WHILE YOU ARE IN THIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE, ARNOLD... YOU WILL NOT DIE! REMEMBER! YOU WILL NOT DIE...

I WILL... NOT... DIE...



NOW OPEN YOUR EYES! YOU WILL SPEAK AND ACT NORMALLY WHILE YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND REMAINS HYPNOTIZED! YOU ARE FREE TO GO! COME BACK IN TWO DAYS!

THANK YOU, DOCTOR JEROME!



DOCTOR ARNOLD MARRING LEFT DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE AND WALKED THOUGHTFULLY TOWARDS HIS HOME AS HE CROSSED A BUSY INTERSECTION...



THEY PULLED ARNOLD FROM BENEATH THE CAR! THE FRONT WHEELS HAD ROLLED OVER HIM! HE WAS IN A COMA...



THE SAIL OF THE AMBULANCE SWIRL SCREAMED THROUGH THE CITY AS ARNOLD MARRING WAS CARRIED TO THE HOSPITAL...



A HASTY EXAMINATION FOLLOWED...



WHEN DOCTOR MANNING DID NOT RETURN TO DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE IN TWO DAYS, LESTER INQUIRED AT THE HOSPITAL AND LEARNED ABOUT THE ACCIDENT...

AND ALTHOUGH HE IS DEAD, HE MOVES... AROUND? HE DOES NOT DEAD?

GENTLEMEN! I CAN EXPLAIN...

DOCTOR MANNING CAME TO MEY HE ASKED ME TO CARRY A TUNOR BY HYPNOTISM! I PUT HIM IN A TRANCE AND ASSURED HIM THAT HE WOULD NOT DIE WHILE IN THIS HYPNOTIC STATE! SO... HE CANNOT DIE UNTIL I RELEASE HIM! NOW WILL HE DELAY ON TAKE ON ANY OF DEATH'S CHARACTERISTICS?

POPPY-DOCK! POOLISH-NESS!

RECALCULAT!

OH! YOU DOUBT ME? THEN FOD! FIGURE IT OUT! GENTLEMEN! GOOD DAY!

A MONTH WENT BY! THEN TWO MONTHS! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING REMAINED IN THE SAME CONDITION! THEN ONE DAY, THE HOSPITAL SUMMONED DOCTOR LESTER JEROME...

YESTERDAY, DOCTOR MANNING REMAINED COMEOLU-NESS! HE M-MAYED AND FOUND THAT HIS CEREBRAL TUNOR HAS ALMOST ENTIRELY DISAPPEARED! HIS HEART STILL DOES NOT BEAT! HE ASKED FOR YOU! HE IS IN TERRIFIED PAN!

GOOD! TAKE ME TO HIM!

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME SMILED AT THE WITHING! ARNOLD MANNING...

HELP... ME... LESTER? THE... PAN... MY... HEART... DO... SOMETHING! THEY... TELL ME... THAT... BY ALL... MEDICAL STAND-ARDS... I AM... DEAD!

YES, ARNOLD! YOU'VE BEEN DEAD FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS! I'VE KEPT YOU FROM DECAYING THROUGH HYPNOTISM! YOUR TUNOR IS GONE, TOO! YOU SEE... I COULD HAVE SAVED LADYME... I... WHAT... THE...

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME HAD UTTERED THE WORD 'LADYME', THE WORD THAT WOULD RELEASE ARNOLD MANNING FROM HIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE! AS THE GATHERED DOCTORS WATCHED, HORRIFIED, ARNOLD FELL BACK LIMPLY ON THE BED! HIS SKIN SHIVERED, AND TURNED FROM PINK TO BLUE TO A SICKENING BROWN! HIS EYES SUNK DEEP INTO HIS HEAD! THEN THEY BECAME HOLLOW BLACK SOCKETS! THE FLESH... ROTTED AND SPRINKLE, FELL FROM HIS BONES! SOON, THE BED WAS COVERED WITH NOTHING BUT A BERTHING, GLOOMING MASS OF PUTRID AND DECAYED FLESH...

MEH... HERE! TO ARNOLD FINALLY GASTRAT! BY WITH HIMSELF! WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIMSELF, ANYWAY! WELL... HOW LONG CAN A DEAD MAN FIGHT OFF DECAY, OH! IT'S SOUND TO MEAN FOR SOME SOONER OR LATER! OF COURSE WITH ARNOLD IT HAD TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME! TOO! HAD ARNOLD DIDN'T LISTEN TO LESTER, ANYWAY! MAYBE HE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD SUCH A MASS OF HIMSELF TOY, NOW! I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT PURVEYER OF FARTY TALK... THE HAULT-KEEPER!

OH, IS THE WIT? IF YOU WANT A PHOTO OF ME IN THE FLESH, READ THE CRIFT-KEEPER'S COMMENT!



CURSE!

He patted the gun-holster at his side; it reassured him and he pressed on through the matted undergrowth of the jungle. It couldn't be much farther, he reflected . . . according to the map the site was a mile east of the River of Doom.

Imagine those idiots, back in Port Au Prince, he chuckled, as he hacked his way forward. Isn't it just like these Haitians . . . falling for every VooDoo story they hear! They're positive that a fortune in jewels is hidden in this crumbling dump, yet no one has the guts to trek through the jungle after it, just because there's supposed to be a deadly curse on the house where the stuff is hidden! He patted the heavy revolver at his side once again. His gun would take care of any curse careless enough to try to keep him from getting his hands on that treasure! Let the Haitians beware of the curse they dreaded . . . the gun at his hip made him safe from this outlandish VooDoo superstition!

The clearing opened with unexpected suddenness in front of him, and under the dripping centuries-old trees he saw the dilapidated house they had described to him. It was ghostly, with that vapor seeming to rise from its sides; he thought, moving cautiously toward the sagging front door and into the dank building. He froze in his tracks immediately. Someone was seated in a chair in the center of the floor, staring off into the murkiness of the room. Quietly, taking great pains not to make a sound,

he drew the revolver from its holster, took aim and fired, at point-blank range.

Three shots rang out, and he smiled grimly as he moved toward the crumbling cabinets along one of the walls. He wasn't considered a dead-shot for nothing! He hadn't expected to find anybody sitting here and guarding that fortune in jewels . . . but he had taken care of whoever it was, anyway! The curse be damned!

The cabinets were full of sparkling jewels . . . there was a king's ransom tucked away in this hovel, his lot the taking! Suddenly the floor creaked behind him and he whirled, his hand gripping the revolver. The chair in which he had left his victim . . . it was empty! And by the glittering light of the gems he could see that there was no pool of blood where there should have been one! His head moved slightly as he slipped the safety catch on his revolver and he saw approaching . . . slowly, ominously, as if there was all eternity to accomplish its task . . . a being with the bloodless look of something long dead! Twice he fired the gun, almost convulsively . . . and still the creature kept advancing, never wavering, never altering its funereal pace!

In the next instant the truth burst in upon him in a wave of panic. This curse he had heard whispered about at Port Au Prince . . . it was one of the *Walking Dead*! THAT was why no one would accompany him on his trek . . . they knew that bullets were pathetically useless against one of the dreaded creatures!

And now the curse was reaching out and touching him, and a chill such as he had never before felt was moving down his body. It was all over, he knew, in his last moment of consciousness! He had been claimed, body and soul, by a *ZOMBIE*!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HELLO, AGAIN, YOU LITTLE MONSTERS! I GUESS YOU'VE BEEN EXPECTANTLY WAITING FOR THIS LATEST TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF HORROR STORIES! WELL, HEH, HEH... I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU! THIS TIME I'LL TELL YOU A TRULY ~~REVOLTING~~ YARN, SO SET A STRONG HOLD ON YOUR STOMACH! HEH! I CALL IT

MIDNIGHT SNACK!



SCENE: THE HOME OF DUNCAN REYNOLDS! TIME: MIDNIGHT!







YES, SIR? WHAT'LL IT BE?

...LET'S SEE! I'LL HAVE ER... I'LL...

SMPP! **SMPP!**
"HEN!" WHAT A SICKENING GOON!



...SIZZLING HAMBURGERS! THAT, THAT BACON FRYING! I'M... I'M SO HUNGRY! SO HUNGRY, AND YET... THE SMELL OF FOOD COOKING MAKES ME **ILL!**



WELL, MISTER, WHAT'LL IT BE?

...CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT? THAT COOKED MEAT IS... MAKING ME HANGOVER?



HEH? HEH! POOR DUNCAN! HE WANTS SO MUCH TO EAT SOMETHING... ONLY HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT IS THAT HE **WANTS!** ANYWAY, HE STUMBLES OUT INTO THE STREET AND SPENDS SEVERAL MINUTES THERE, REGAINING HIS COMPOURE...



...EVERYTHING SEEMS SO **DOUBLED** TONIGHT? I... I **DOUBT** TO GO HOME, BUT SOMETHING... SOMETHING WON'T LET ME! I... CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF.



(DRA-AGH!) JUST THE THOUGHT OF THAT **DOGGED** FOOD SICKENS ME! **HEN!** NEVER HAPPENED TO ME **BEFORE!** HMPF! LAST TIME I'LL EVER GO INTO **JNMF** RESTAUR...



...GEE? I... I FEEL... **DIZZY!** AWFULLY **DIZZY!** FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO PASS OUT...

B. BLACKNESS CLOUDS HIS EYES AND MIND! HE FEELS HIMSELF FLOATING IN A WHIRLING VOID... AND THEN, SUDDENLY, IT IS OVER...



AGAINST HIS WILL, HE ENTERS THE COMETERY AND GOES FROM ONE GRAVE TO ANOTHER...



BEWILDERED, AND DRIVEN BY
A FURY HE CANNOT RESIST,
DUNCAN AGAIN AND AGAIN DIGS
DEEPER INTO THE EARTH!



FINALLY THE COFFIN IS SAVED,
THE LID RAISED...



SUDDENLY, A SPARK OF REALIZATION SEEPS
INTO HIS CONSCIOUSNESS... A REALIZATION OF
WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO DO!



OH, PLEASE! PLEASE! DON'T MAKE
ME DO IT! BUT... BUT I... HAVE TO...
SOMETHING'S FORGIVING ME FOR... OH-H
I... I FEEL... GUILT ASH...



HEH, HEH! AGAIN THE EMPTY TERRIFYING BLACK-
NESS SURROUNDS HIM, AND WHEN HE REGAINS
CONSCIOUSNESS...

WHA...WHAT? MUST
HAVE PASSED OUT AGAIN? I...I FEEL SO
STRANGE! I...GOOD LORD! THE...THE CORPSE!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!



HE STARES, HORRIFIED, AT THE MUTILATED,
PARTIALLY DEVoured BODY BEFORE HIM...

L. I TRIED NOT TO DO IT! I TRIED! BUT
THE CRAVING WAS TOO
STRONG! I...WHAT'S
THAT NOISE?



PEOPLE! A CROWD OF
PEOPLE... WITH TORCHES!
THEY'RE AFTER ME...
GOING THIS WAY!



THEY WANT TO TAKE AWAY MY
FOOD! BUT I WON'T LET
THEM! I'LL RUN AWAY
WITH IT!



THEY'VE SEEN ME!...HAVE TO
RUN FASTER! I'LL HIDE MY
FOOD! MUSTN'T LET THEM
CATCH ME!



TIRING UNDER THE CORPSE'S WEIGHT AS HE
DODGES AND WEIGHS THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD,
DUNCAN SUDDENLY TRIPS...AND FALLS!



AN ETERNITY SEEMS TO PASS, BUT FINALLY HIS
ARM QUIVERS... HIS EYES FLICKER AND OPEN...

WHE! I'M BACK HOME! WHERE...WHERE'S
THE GRAVEYARD...THE CORPSE? OH...I
GET IT NOW! HUH! I'VE BEEN HERE ALL THE
TIME! MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP!
I'VE ONLY BEEN DREAMING!





It was a diabolical plot! Ralph was sure
Cora would be...

SCARED TO DEATH!



CORA CLUTCHED HER SHAWL TIGHTLY AROUND HER
THROAT AND STARED HORRIFIED INTO THE DARKNESS
OF THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE HER ROOM! RALPH, HER
HUSBAND, GRAPED THE ARM OF HER WHEELCHAIR,
STUDYING HER...

"HE... HE'S COMING, CORA!
YOUR UNCLE'S COMING
FOR US!"

"NO! NO, RALPH! I
WON'T BELIEVE IT!"



CORA'S FACE WAS WET WITH PERSPIRATION! HER HAND
TREMBLED... THE SHAWLS WHITENED... AS SHE DROVE
HER SHAWL PROTECTIVELY ABOUT HER! RALPH SMILED
SLIGHTLY AS HE WATCHED HER REACTION! IT WAS
GOING TO WORK! IT HAD TO!

"LISTEN, CORA! LISTEN! HE
FOOTSTEPS... ON THE STAIRS!
HE'S COMING TO AVENGE HIS
MURDER!"

"STOP IT, RALPH!
STOP IT..."



TEARS FILLED CORA'S EYES! THEY SPILLED OVER THE RIM OF HER EYELIDS AND RAN CRABBY DOWN HER CHEEKS! SHE BEGAN TO SOB... HEAVENS! SOON THAT WACKED HER BODY AND SHIFTED HER WHEELCHAIR.



REMEMBER, CORA? REMEMBER THE NIGHT WE KILLED HIM?

CORA GASPED! RALPH CHUCKLED TO HIMSELF! POOR CORA! ONE MORE HEART ATTACK WILL SURELY KILL HER! THE DOCTOR HAD TOLD RALPH...



REMEMBER, CORA? WE DID IT... FOR HIS MONEY!

P. PLEASE, RALPH! SOB... SOB, PLEASE DON'T...

AS RALPH WATCHED CORA, HIS THOUGHTS WENT BACK... BACK OVER THE LONG MONTHS TO THE BEGINNING! IT HAD ALL STARTED AT A COCKTAIL PARTY GIVEN BY HER UNCLE IN CORA'S HONOR...



REALLY, FRANK? I FEEL TERRIBLE ABOUT THIS! GOING TO A PARTY WITHOUT AN INVITATION!

FORGET IT, RALPH! CORA'S UNCLE SHOULDN'T KNOW YOU WERE VISITING ME!



YES, BUT...

SHHH! HERE HE COMES NOW!

AM, FRANK? GLAD YOU CAME! WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?



OH, THIS IS RALPH WEATHERBERRY'S FROM NEW YORK! I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF BRINGING HIM ALONG TO YOUR NIECE'S PARTY! I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND!

NOWHERE! HOW DO YOU DO, RALPH? I'M CORA'S UNCLE, ALEX WEATHERBERRY! GLAD TO HAVE YOU!

RALPH SMILED TO HIMSELF AS HE WATCHED CORA SCURRY IN HER WHEELCHAIR! YES! THAT WAS WHEN HE HAD FIRST MET HER.



HEY, FRANK? WHO'S THE PRETTY ONE!

THAT'S YOUR HOSTESS, CORA WEATHERBERRY! SHE SETS ALL THIS UP WHEN THE OLD GEEZER DROPS! SOLE HEIR...

SOLE HEIR? ALL OF ALEX WEATHERBERRY'S WEALTH WOULD BE CORA'S SOME DAY! SUDDENLY IT HAD COME TO RALPH... THE WHOLE PLAN...



WELL, FRANK? YOU'RE SOME PAL! AIN'T YOU GOING TO INTRODUCE ME?

OH, YEAH? SURE, RALPH! 'GONNA GONNA...

THERE WAS A HORSE BELOW? CORA JUMPED, SAYING FOR BREATH! RALPH CROSSED HER. HER ORAL-WHITE SKIN. HER WRINKLED FOREHEAD! SHE WASN'T PRETTY NOT ANYMORE! NOT AS SHE HAD BEEN WHEN HE HAD FIRST ASKED...

WILL YOU MARRY ME, CORA? I KNOW WE'VE ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER A SHORT TIME, YET.

OH, RALPH! DO YOU REALLY WANT ME?

AGAIN RALPH LAUGHED SILENTLY! CORA... ADMITS THE PUNISHMENT! LIKE NOW... CRIMINALS... SNAKING! THE BILLY BOO! HE HAD WANTED HER UNCLE'S MONEY... NOT HER...

THEN, YOU... YOU'LL SAY YES?

OF COURSE, DARLING! OF COURSE I'LL MARRY YOU!



NOT THAT CORA HAD BEEN SO BAD TO LOOK AT BACK THEN! YES! TO RALPH, EXPERIENCED, WORLDLY, SURE... THE MONEY HAD SEEMED SO MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE.

THE WIND OUTSIDE CORA'S BED-ROOM WHISTLED THROUGH THE TREES! ANOTHER NOISE... ANOTHER GASP! RALPH ENCLOSED HER CLOSELY. SHE WAS BREATHING HEAVEN, NOW... PAINFULLY.

AND THEN THE WEDDING! RALPH ESPECIALLY REMEMBERED THE WEDDING! NOW HE HAD SLIPPED THE RING ON HER FINGER, SAYING THE WORDS... BUT THINKING...



WHAT WAS THAT, CORA? NO, SHE ANOTHER FOOTSTEP. I WANT... ON THE STAIRS... IT CAN'T BE...



AH, THE NIGHTMOON! THE DRIVE TO EUROPE... ON THE OLD MAN'S MONEY...

AND THEN THOSE HOTTER MONTHS AT THE PLANT! WORKING, LIKE ANY OTHER LABORER, IN THE OLD MAN'S PLANT...

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MOON TONIGHT! LOVE ME, DARLING!

WITH ALL MY HEART, CORA!

NOT TO MARRY AT THE BOTTOM, SOME SOMEDAY THIS PLANT WILL BE CORA'S... AND YOU'LL HAVE TO RUN IT

OF COURSE, UNCLE ALEX! I UNDERSTAND I WANT TO LEARN



WANTED IT! RALPH HAD ASKED IT! HATED EVERY-
THING ABOUT IT! AND THEN IT HAD COME TO HIM! THE
PERFECT SOLUTION...



OF COURSE! WHAT A POOL, I'VE
SEEN! NOW, WHY WAIT TILL
THE OLD GEEKER DIES? WHY
NOT... HELP HIM?

YES! THE NEXT FEW MONTHS HAD BEEN TOUGH
ON RALPH! HE HAD HAD TO BE ON HIS TOES! CONVINING
SOPH WASN'T EASY.

AND
THEN, IN FRONT OF THE MEN,
HE INSULTED ME... CALLED
ME INCOMPETENT...
A RUMORFELL!

OH, RALPH, DARLING!
I'M SO SORRY!
I'LL... I'LL SPEAK
TO HIM.



IT HAD TAKEN PATIENCE... AND
INGENUITY.

NO, SOPH! I'LL
FIGHT MY OWN
BATTLES!

I CAN'T UNDER-
STAND HIS ACTIONS!
I REALLY CAN'T!

HE HAD HAD TO USE CAREFUL
THINGS... PSYCHOLOGY...

...CALLED ME A FOLD-
SWITCH! ACCUSED ME
OF MARRIAGE! FOR
YOUR INHERITANCE!

AND
THE
MATERIAL,
OLD.

BEST! AND THEN HE SAID THAT HE'D
CUT FORD OUT OF HIS WILL!

HE ACCUSED FORD OF
THE SAME THING...
THAT ALL FORD
CARED ABOUT WAS
HIS MONEY!

LET HIM!
HE'S NOTHING
BUT A BITTER
UNFORTUNATE OLD
SKINFLINT!



A PUSHOVER... THAT'S WHAT SOPH HAD ALWAYS BEEN!
AT FIRST SHE HAD VIOLENTLY OBJECTED, BUT SOON...
SHE HAD RELUCTANTLY AGREED.

WHY NOT? IT'S FORD'S MONEY,
RIGHT? HE'S OLD! HE'S
LIVED HIS LIFE! IT'LL
BE EASY.

ALL RIGHT!
ALL RIGHT!
WE'LL KILL
HIM!



AND SO, ONE NIGHT, AN OLD WIDOW ALEX WERTHORN
HAD BEEN STROLLING NEAR THE POND ON HIS VAST
ESTATE...



THEY HAD PUT HIM, UNCONSCIOUS,
PAGE DOWN IN THE FORD.

IT'LL LOOK LIKE
HE FELL STRUCK
HIS HEAD AND
DROWNED!

OH, RALPH! I
BOB. I'M
AFRAID!

LATER THAT NIGHT THEY HAD
CALLED THE POLICE

YES! HE WENT OUT
ABOUT THREE HOURS
AGO... AND HADN'T
COME BACK!

THE POLICE HAD COME... HAD
SEARCHED THE GROUNDS... AND
FOUND HIM...

POOR OLD BINK!
'CLIPPED AND
FELL... GUESSES!

WELL, LET'S GET
HIM INSIDE!



YES, THEY'D GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT! CORA INHERITED THE
MONEY BUT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO HER! PERHAPS
IT WAS HER CONSCIENCE BOOTHERING HER! ANYWAY SHE'D
BEGUN TO BROOD. LOOK WHO!... AND RAPIDLY

CORA! YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING
TERRIBLE, LATELY! YOU'VE GOT
TO FORGET ABOUT IT, DO
YOU HEAR?

I CAN'T, RALPH!
(BOB) I. CAN'T!



SHE HAD DROWN HERSELF... FRIGHTENED! SHE'D JUMP
AT EVERY SOUND! THEN SHE'D HAD HER HEART ATTACK...

SHE'S A SICK WOMAN, RALPH!
ANOTHER ATTACK WILL
SURELY KILL HER! SHE
MUST TAKE IT VERY
EASY...

I UNDERSTAND, BOOTH!



AND SO THE IDEA HAD COME TO RALPH! WITH CORA
DEAD, THE WEATHERLY FORTUNE WOULD BE HIS...
ALL OF IT! AND CORA WOULD BE A PIONEER...

GOOD LORD!



WHAT? WHAT IS IT,
RALPH?

I... I THOUGHT I SAW HIS FACE...
UNCLE ALEX'S FACE... STARRING
AT US! THROUGH THE WINDOW!

NO! YOU'RE JOKING...
BOB... WITH ME!



THE WIND FLANNED A SHUTTER
DOWNSTAIRS AND RALPH SHRIEKED
OUT OF HIS REVERIE! CORA, STILL
TREMBLING, WAS STARING INTO THE
DARKENED HALLWAY...

WHAT WAS THAT?
ANOTHER FOOTSTEP?

NO-NO?
I.E...



RALPH SMILED! THIS NIGHT...THE
WIND...EVERYTHING HAD BEEN PER-
FECT! 'I SHOULD HAVE BEEN AN
ACTOR', HE THOUGHT! ANY MOMENT
NOW...ANY MOMENT HER FOUNDRING
HEART WOULD FAIL...

HE'S COMING, CORA!
DON'T YOU HEAR HIM?

YES...
I...



SUDDENLY HER EYES SEEMED TO
POP OUT OF HER HEAD! RALPH
WHISTLED! 'THIS IS IT, CORA!', HE
THOUGHT! SHE HEAVED A FINAL
WRETCHING SIGH AND DOUBLED UP...

CORA!



RALPH BENT OVER HER! SHE WAS DEAD...

POOR
CORA!
POOR...POOR
CORA!



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SOUND IN THE DARKENED
HALLWAY...

WHAT WAS
THAT?

CREAK



IT CAME THROUGH THE DOOR! IT WAS BENT OVER...
LIKE AN OLD MAN...



THE STENCH OF GRAVE-MOUNDS FILLED THE ROOM...

KEEP AWAY!
KEEP AWAY
FROM ME!



THE THING REACHED OUT ITS ROT-
TED ARM FOR RALPH... MOVING
TOWARD HIM...



THE CLOTHING HUNG IN SHREDS
FROM ITS MASSOT-COVERED LIMBS!
RALPH CLAWED AT ITS FACE AND
PIECES OF DEAD-FOUL-SMELLING
FLESH CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS...



IT LIFTED HIM IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP
AND CARRIED HIM DOWN THE STAIRS!
THE OOR OF DECAY BURNED RALPH'S
NOSTRILS AS HE STRUGGLED FOR
AIR...



THE THING WAS STRONG! IT HELD HIM FAST! IT STUM-
BLED OUT ACROSS THE WELL-KEPT LAWNS AND DOWN
THE BLADE TO THE POND! RALPH BEGAN TO SCREAM...



THE THING STOOD ARISE... THERE IN THE CENTER OF
THE POND...CLUTCHING THE STRUGGLING RALPH! SLOWLY,
THEY BEGAN TO SINK... DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE
SOFT MUD...



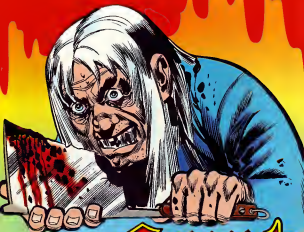
IT STEPPED INTO THE POND...LEADING OUT TO THE
MIDDLE! THE POND BOTTOM WAS SOFT OUT THERE...
LIKE SUPERGLUE! RALPH'S SCREAMING WAS WILD...
ALMOST ANIMAL... LIKE...



DOWN...DOWN...UNTIL ONLY RALPH'S UPSTRETCHED
HAND REMAINED ABOVE THE SURFACE...



AND THEN...EVEN THAT DISAPPEARED INTO THE MUD!



The Crypt Keeper



PAPER CUT

PROUDLY PRESENTS THE SORDID
SECOND ISSUE OF THE ALL-NEW...

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES



RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO WILLIAM M. GAINES, AL FELDSTEIN,
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ORLANDO, MARIE SEVERIN, AL WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"THE TENANT"

NEIL KLEID

WRITER

STEVE MANNION

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THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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FROM THE

CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME TO MY "OPEN CRYPT!"
BOILS AND GHOULS! SINCE SHIPPING
OUT THE OLD WITCH AND THE VAULT-
KEEPER I'VE BEEN LOOKING TO RENT
OUT MY TOMBS-WITH-A-VIEW!

MY ONLINE POST ON CRAZED'S LIST HAS
GOTTEN TERRIFIC RESULTS! JUST LOOK AT
ALL THESE APPLICANTS DYING TO RENT
SPACE IN MY COZY CRYPT!
REMINDS ME OF A
TALE I CALL...

The
TENANT



NUMBER 613 1869 AVENUE HAS SEEN BETTER DAYS.

THROUGH GRIMY WINDOWS, ITS TENANTS WATCH SNOWFLAKES COVER THE STREETS WITH A FINE WHITE COAT, KNOWING THAT THE SNOW HEALS A COLD THAT WON'T BE HELD BACK BY SHODDY INSULATION AND IRREGULAR BLASTS OF HEAT.

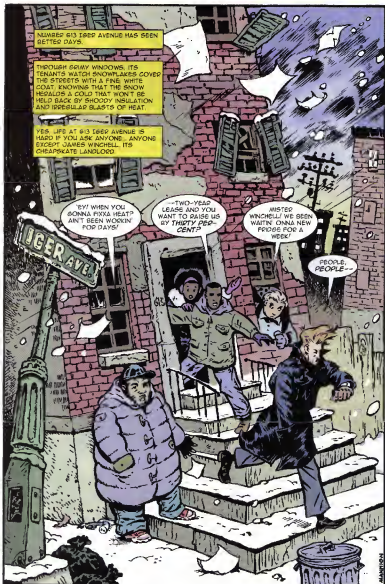
YES, LIFE AT 613 1869 AVENUE IS HARD IF YOU ASK ANYONE. ANYONE EXCEPT JAMES WINCHELL, ITS CHEAPSKATE LANDLORD.

"BY! WHEN YOU SONNA FIXXA HEAT? AIN'T BEEN WOOKIN' FOR DAYS!"

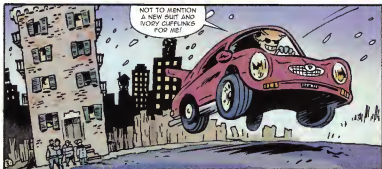
"--TWO-YEAR LEASE AND YOU WANT TO RAISE US BY THIRTY PER-CENT?"

"WINSTED WINCHELL! WE SEEN WATIN' ONNA NEW PRIDE FOR A WEEK!"

"PEOPLE, PEOPLE--"

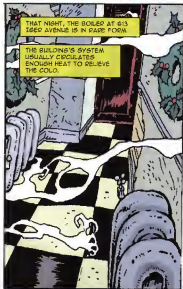




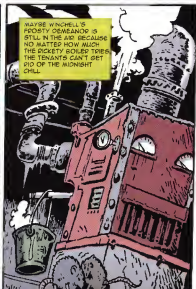


THAT NIGHT, THE BOILER AT 813
ICEO AVENUE IS IN RAPE FORM.

THE BUILDING'S SYSTEM
USUALLY CIRCULATES
ENOUGH HEAT TO RELIEVE
THE COLD.



WAYNE WINCHELL'S
FROSTY GEMANOR IS
STILL IN THE AIR BECAUSE
NO MATTER HOW MUCH
THE DICKETY BOILER TRIES
THE TENANTS CAN'T GET
RID OF THE MIDNIGHT
CHILL.



THE TENANTS MAKE DO WITH
COVERS AND LAYERS, HUGGING
FOR WARMTH.



BUT NO AMOUNT OF BLANKETS
CAN SAVE MRS. EUGENIA F. WILKES
IN APARTMENT 9-B.



IN THE MORNING, SOMEBODY
CALLS THE PARAMEDICS



THE PARAMEDICS, IN
TURN, CALL THE POLICE

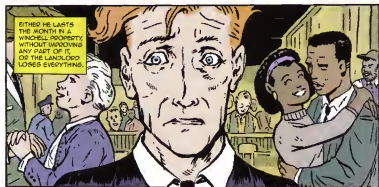
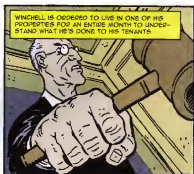
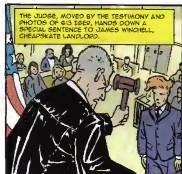
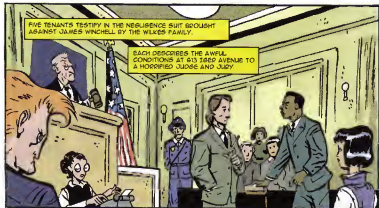


THE POLICE
CALL ON
MRS. WILKES'
GRANDSON



AND AFTER AN
APPROPRIATE AMOUNT
OF GRIEVING, MRS.
WILKES' GRANDSON
CALLS HIS LAWYER.








THE BUILDING IS CURRENTLY EMPTY, AND JAMES WINCHELL IS PROUD THAT HE CONVINCED THE COURT TO INSTALL HIM IN HIS ONLY PROPERTY THAT HAS NO TENANTS

DESPITE ORDERS NOT TO IMPROVE THE PROPERTY, HE MOVES IN WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART GADGETS AND SEVERAL SPACE HEATERS, AND AS SUCH HIS FIRST FEW DAYS ARE A BREEZE

A cartoon illustration of James Winchell, a man with orange hair, wearing a purple suit, sitting in a green armchair. He is talking on a black rotary phone and holding a small black device. His feet are propped up on a green ottoman. The room has a large window with a view of a city at night, a floor lamp with a blue shade, and a small table with a glass of red wine and a bottle.

OKAY, BOILER.
BOILER, WHERE'S
THE BOILER?

HOW HARD
CAN IT BE TO GET
SOME HEAT GOING? IF
CAVEMEN CAN DO IT WITH
TWO STICKS, I'M SURE I
CAN DO IT

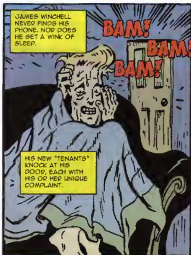


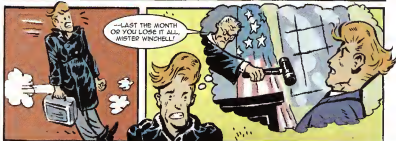
SERIOUSLY, WHERE'S THE SUPER WHEN YOU NEED HIM?





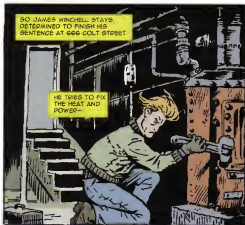






SO JAMES WINCHELL STAYS,
DETERMINED TO FINISH HIS
SENTENCE AT 666 COLT STREET.

HE TRIES TO FIX
THE HEAT AND
POWER—



BUT THE BUILDING IS
IN SUCH DISREPAIR
THAT NOTHING WORKS.



AND AS NIGHT FALLS AND
BRINGS THE WINTER CHILL...



ANOTHER OF WINCHELL'S
TENANTS ARRIVES WITH A
COMPLAINT.

HELLOP
MISTER
WINCHELL?

**NOK
NOK
NOK**







SEE?
DISGRACEFUL.

I LIKE A
TIDY PLOT, MISTER
WINCHELL. IF YOU'D
BE SO KIND...?

WH-WHAT?
YOU WANT
ME TO...?



NO! I MEAN, NO,
I CAN'T... I WON'T!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

BUT DEAD,
IT'S YOUR
JOB.

HEH...HAHAHA!
NO, IT'S NOT!
I'M THE LANDLORD...
I JUST OWN THE
BUILDING! I'M NOT
THE CARETAKER.



YOU GOT A
PROBLEM, TAKE
IT UP WITH HIM!

OOOH!



CARETAKER DIED
50X MONTHS
AGO.

SO FIX
THE LADY'S
GRAVE.
EY?





AND SO JAMES WINCHELL CLEANS
AND JAMES WINCHELL FIXES

HE REPAINTS HEADSTONES, TELLS
MOSS AND CLEANS EACH GRAVE



HE CLEANS EACH GRAVE AND HOPES THAT
HIS TENANTS WILL LEAVE HIM BE



A MONTH GOES
BY AND JAMES
WINCHELL RE-
TURNS TO HIS
COMFORTABLE
LIFE AND FANCY
APARTMENT...



BUT EACH
MORNING HE
RETURNS TO
666 COLT
STREET TO FIX
THE PLOTS,
MORGUES AND
CRYPTS

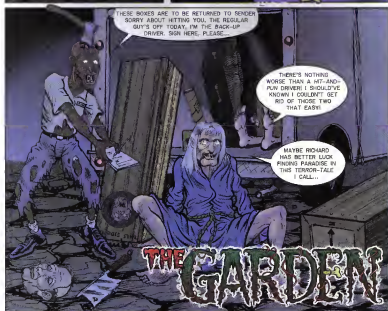


EACH DAY THE LINE BLURS A LITTLE MORE BETWEEN TENANT
AND LANDLORD AS JAMES WINCHELL ASSUMES HIS FATE
AS BOTH CARPENTER AND LANDLORD TO THE DEAD.

AND SO WE LEAVE JAMES WINCHELL, CHEAPSKATE LANDLORD OF 613 156R AVENUE AND 686 COLT STREET, MAKING UP FOR A LIFETIME OF POOR CARPETAKING BY FINALLY LEARNING TO DO IT PROPERLY, DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT...

...BECAUSE IF HE DOESN'T,
LIKE MANY OF HIS
PROPERTIES, HE'LL NEVER
AGAIN SEE BETTER DAYS.





THE GATE DOESN'T CREAK
WHEN YOU OPEN IT. FOR
SOME REASON THIS FACT
LEAPS OUT AT YOU AS
SOON AS YOU ARRIVE,
DOESN'T IT, RICHARD?

THE HINGES ARE WELL
OILED, A FRESH COAT
OF PAINT SUSTAINS,
AND THERE'S NOT A
SPOT OF RUST ON IT.



THE SWEETNESS OF WILDFLOWERS
GOBBING IN THE SUN TICKLE YOUR
NOSE. THE CHIRPINS OF TINY SONG-
BIRDS COMFORTS YOUR EARS.

THE TREE BOWS,
THEY DROOP WITH
FRUIT.





MORE SUCCULENT THAN ANYTHING YOU'VE EVER TASTED BEFORE.

THICK CURLS OF GRAPEVINES SWATHED THE SURROUNDING WALLS, RIPE FOR THE VINEYARD.



JUST AS THEY SAID, RUNNING WATER BUBBLES EVERYWHERE.

FOR YOU, THAT WAS ONE OF THE SELLING POINTS OF THE PLACE.



YES, EVERYTHING IN THIS GARDEN, YOUR GARDEN, CONFORMS PRECISELY TO YOUR SPECIFICATIONS.

...EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE NEVER LAID EYES ON IT BEFORE.

YOU TOOK THE BUS
TO YOUR NEW HOME.



YOU PACKED LIGHTLY
FOR THE TRIP.



YOU HAD PLANNED FOR THE JOURNEY FOR WEEKS,
MADE ALL OF THE ARRANGEMENTS, SET
THE AFFAIRS OF YOUR OLD LIFE IN ORDER.



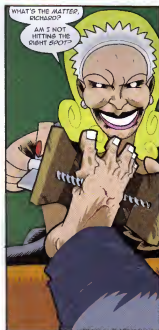
BUT STILL WHEN THE MOMENT OF EMBARK-
ATION WAS SET RIGHT BEFORE YOU, WHERE
YOU COULD SEE IT PLAIN.















DIDN'T THINK SO!



IT'S EVEN MORE PAINFUL THAN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE, WHICH YOU DIDN'T THINK POSSIBLE.

JABBED GLASS CUTTING, SLICING, TEARING.



YOUR THROBBING FEET SLAP AND SLIDE AND SKID ON THE SUDDEN SLICKNESS OF THE FLOOR!

YOUR PUSHERS, HOWEVER, ARE NOT SO HINDERED.



THIS IS NO TIME TO CATCH YOUR BREATH, RICHARD! YOU CAN HEAR THE CRUNCHING OF THEIR HEAVY BOOTS ON THE GLASS RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

KEEP RUNNING, RICHARD!

DON'T STOP...











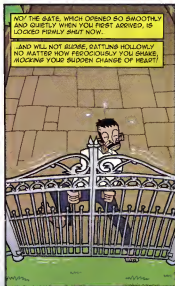




ESCAPE? THAT'S ALL THAT BURNS
IN YOUR BRAIN NOW!

YOUR DREAMS OF
LUXURY---FORGOTTEN!

PAST GLORIES---
CRUMBLED INTO DUST!



NO! THE GATE, WHICH OPENED SO SMOOTHLY
AND QUIETLY WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED, IS
LOCKED FIRMLY SHUT NOW.

...AND WILL NOT BUDGE, BATTING HOLLOWLY
NO MATTER HOW FEROCIOUSLY YOU SHAKE,
MOCKING YOUR SUDDEN CHANGE OF HEART!



YOU HAD NO SUCH CHANGE OF
HEART ONCE YOU WERE ACTUALLY
ON THE BUS, THOUGH, DID YOU,
RICHARD?

NO...YOUR NEW FRIENDS HELPED
YOU MAKE THE VIDEO THE NIGHT
BEFORE. THE ONE WHERE YOU
TOLD THE NEWS MEDIA...

...AS WELL AS YOUR PARENTS, WHO NEVER QUITE UNDERSTOOD YOU. THE GIRLFRIENDS WHO DRIFTED AWAY FROM YOU AND YOUR COLDNESS...



THE NEIGHBORS WHO SHUNNED YOU AS SOME KIND OF WEIRDO...THE CO-WORKERS, THE BOSS WHO NEVER SAW YOU AS ANYTHING OTHER THAN A FACELESS COB...

...ALL THE WAY UP TO THE POLITICIANS AND THE GENERALS, THEIR HANDS DRIPPING WITH THE BLOOD OF INNOCENTS

...THE PURVEYORS OF SHIT THAT PASSES FOR ENTERTAINMENT THESE DAYS...



...YOU TOLD THEM ALL IN YOUR VIDEO, DIDN'T YOU, RICHARD? YOU TOLD THEM THE COMMITMENT YOU HAD MADE!

SO YOU COULDN'T LET YOURSELF BE ARRESTED. NOW COULD YOU, BEFORE YOUR TASK WAS COMPLETED? WITH THAT VIDEO AS CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF YOUR FAILURE?

THE HUMILIATION WOULD BE WORSE THAN ANYTHING YOU COULD IMAGINE...



--THE SHARE THAT YOU HAD ROTCHED THE ONE, SIMPLE DUTY YOUR NEW FRIENDS, YOUR FELLOW WARRIORS HAD ENTRUSTED YOU WITH--



--TO BECOME A
SUICIDE BOMBER?





APPARENTLY NOT



FOR THEY'RE HERE. THEY'RE
ALL HERE, RICHARD.



...EVERY SINGLE PERSON YOU MUR-
DERED ON THAT BUS IS HERE, RICHARD.



AND BECAUSE ALL THE WOUNDS YOU RECEIVE WILL QUICKLY HEAL, THEY
CAN SHOW YOU HOW... GRATEFUL THEY ARE TO YOU FOR SENDING THEM HERE.



FOREVER





THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Greetings, kiddies, welcome to a quaint space-filling tradition called... a LETTERS PAGE. Nowadays, all we get in the mail are bills and ANTHRAX! Back in the days, fans sent letters opining on our terror yarns, and ranked which ones they liked and feared most! Well, **"THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER"** is back and open for business! Let's start with a couple of initial responses to the online preview of "Body of Work" by Marc Bulgrin and Mr. Evers.



Subject: TFFC art!

Wow, after seeing the art examples for your new Tales from the Crypt comic, all I can say is, "OUCH!" I am not commenting on the writing, as the art kept me from taking the time to read any of it. Perhaps you are trying to market this to young kids who have never come in contact with the original comics and reprints.

Regardless... all of the EC FanAddicts I have heard from feel that this stuff is really hard to look at. I have only seen the one artist that you have featured, and if this is the best you can come up with after being in the comics business for decades.... I suggest you go to the San Diego Comic Con and try to hire some "real" horror artist. Tomb Tales put out a similar product.... covers by real EC artists and interior pages that were hot and mess. It was a massive failure.

I can't say if you will do well with your product, but if you are counting on true EC fans to buy this stuff, you will probably be disappointed unless you invest in better art. The current art is too childish and the colorist should be painting circus wagons. Horror can be funny, but it needs to look scary.

Respectfully disappointed,

Bill Leisch, Editor/publisher

Horror From The Crypt Of Fear

Sa, Billy, you're not planning to join the Mr. Evers Fan Club, are you?

Subject: Thanks for ruining one of the greatest horror comics of all time!

This has to be a joke, right? I was very much looking forward to the Tales from the Crypt comic. I looked at the preview art for the book and it's safe to say you destroyed any chance on it being redeeming. I won't be supporting this and I am quite angry another company didn't pick it up. What demo-graphic are you trying to cater too? Adults!!!!

Phil Koza

Why, we want our demon graphics to appeal to all demographics, Phil! Now let's hear from some dead-heads who actually bought our premiere Papercuts masterpiece...

Subject: Great To See Tales From The Crypt Is Back... From The Dead

Hey!!!, I must say I was ecstatic to hear that Tales From The Crypt was being resurrected for a whole new generation to enjoy. I, being a child of the 80's, was not able to enjoy the Crypt's initial run. I was only able to read reprints and watch the television series. That's why when I picked up my first issue of Tales From The Crypt I had a gleam of hope in my eye. I was going to read a Tales From The Crypt that hardly anyone had read yet. Whereas with the reprints nothing was new and exciting anymore because it had been poorly imitated numerous times over. It's just great knowing there is going to be new stories coming from my favorite ghoul, the Crypt-Keeper. Keep up the good work!

Pat

Lockport, IL

Thanks, Pat, for your kind thoughts!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt

Hey and howdy! Just wanted to shoot you a quick double thumbs up on the release of Tales From The Crypt issue #1 this week. Loved it. Absolutely, wholeheartedly loved it. Takes me back to the good old days of the original series. I had never gotten the opportunity to read them when they were released "live," but I certainly picked them up when I found out about them in later years. During my formative educational "hey, comics are cool" years.

How much did I love this issue? Well, I wrote a review and posted it online:

<http://nond.permutedpress.com/index.php?archives/37-Tales-From-The-Crypt-Issue-1-pub-Papercuts.html>

Hope you like it.

Zombie Zak

Love us or hate us, thanks to everyone who took the time and trouble to write us! Now tell us what you thought of our sickly sinister second issue. Send your letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your crazed commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: salscrap@papercuts.com.

That's all for now! Don't miss **TALES FROM THE CRYPT #3** for more misunderstood madness and possibly even...a lunatic letter from YOU!



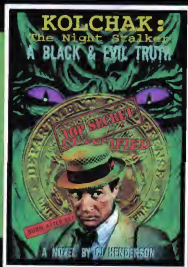
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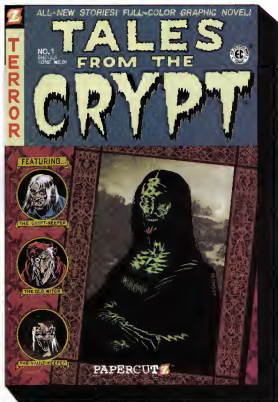
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E.C. FANS!

YOU'VE WRITTEN!
YOU'VE E-MAILED!
YOU'VE PHONED!
YOU'VE THREATENED US!
SO HERE IT IS! THE COLLECTION!
YOU'VE DEMANDED!



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TALES FROM THE CRYPT

BASED ON THE CLASSIC EC COMICS SERIES



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KURTZMAN, JOE ORLANDO, GEORGE ROUSSOS, MARIE SEVERIN, AL
WILLIAMSON, AND WALLY WOOD.

"A MURDERIN' IDOL"

MORT TODD
WRITER
STEVE MANNION
ARTIST
DIGIKORE
COLOR
MARK LERER
LETTERER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

"SLABBED"

STEFAN PETRUCHA
WRITER
DON HUDSON
ARTIST
DIGIKORE
COLOR
MARK LERER
LETTERER

GHOULUNATICS SEQUENCES

JIM SALICRUP
WRITER
RICK PARKER
ARTIST/TITLE
LETTERER/CO-OR
MARK LERER
LETTERER
STEVE MANNION
COVER ARTIST

TERRY'S WRITER



THE PUBLISHER

JIM SALICRUP



THE OLD EDITOR

Concussions by Rick Parker

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**A MURDERIN'
IDOL!** AS NOT
SEEN ON TV!

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IT'S A RUTHY TENEMENT
PLAT' A WANNABE SUPER-
STAR HAS OVERLEAF

I'M HERE AT
THE FIRST DAY OF
TRYOUTS FOR NEXT
SEASON'S EDITION OF
POPSTAR IDOL--

OH, NO! WHY
DIDN'T YOU WAKE
ME UP? YOU KNEW
I WANTED TO BE
THERE, SLODIN!

--AS YOU CAN
SEE, THE CROWD IS
IMMENSE! MANY HAVE
BEEN IN LINE FOR DAYS
TO GET THEIR CHANCE TO
AUDITION FOR THE
HIT SHOW!

OH, JAYSAN! LOOK
HOW MANY PEOPLE
ARE THERE! YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE
A CHANCE OF
GETTING IN!

I'VE GOT TO TRY! THIS
IS MY BIG CHANCE TO
BE A SUPERSTAR!

I KNOW I'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO
BE THE NEXT IDOL! EVEN THOUGH I
HAVEN'T SUNG PROFESSIONALLY, I'VE
GOT THE LOOKS, THE MOVES AND
AN INCREDIBLE SINGING
VOICE!

MY MOM
TOLD ME
SO!

YOU
SHOULD BE
LOOKING FOR
A REAL JOB
INSTEAD OF
LIVING IN YOUR
FANTASY
WORLD!



DEJECTED BUT DETERMINED,
THE POTENTIAL POPSTAR
WANDERS BACK HOME...

DARN IT! I'M GONNA GET
IN LINE LATER TONIGHT TO
MAKE SURE I GET IN! I'D
SELL MY SOUL TO GET
ON THAT SHOW!



PREOCCUPIED WITH HIS THOUGHTS, HE
DOESN'T NOTICE A LARGE BOOK BLOCKING
HIS PATH AND STUMBLES OVER IT...



WHAT TH---? WHERE DID
THAT DARN THING COME
FROM?



BOOK OF
DREAM FULFILLMENT?
THIS THING LOOKS
ANCIENT AS
HELL!





COPYING THE ARCANIC FIGURES FROM THE BOOK, HE CONTEMPLATES HIS NEXT STEP...

I'M SUPPOSED TO GIVE A BLOOD OFFERING TO SUMMON A DEMON TO GRANT MY WISH. B-BUT I CAN'T KILL SOMETHING... OR CAN I? I'VE GOT TO WIN ON POPSTAR IDOL!



PLACING A MOUSETRAP ON THE RUDE, HE LOADS IT WITH HEAPS OF PEANUT BUTTER...

GLORIA'S BEEN BUBBLING ME ABOUT GETTING RID OF THE MICE IN THE APARTMENT, SO I'LL MAKE HER WISH COME TRUE, TOO!



HIDING IN THE SHADOWS, JAYSAN DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG...

HA! IT WORKED!
NOW WHAT?!



BEFORE HIS ASTONISHED EYES, THE DEAD MOUSE IS CONSUMED IN FLAMES AND A STRANGE SMOKE RISES WITH AN OFFENSIVE SULFURIC SMELL!







AND TRUE TO THE DEMON'S PROMISE, JAY'S AN AUDITION BEFORE SYLMON BOWELL, APAULA O'DOUL, AND RENELL JAXON!





PULLING FREE FROM JAYSAN, SLODIA
SLIPS ON SOME SOAPY WATER AND...



OH NO! SLODIA!
ARE YOU OKAY?



THERE IS NO RESPONSE AS HER
LIFELESS BODY STARTS TO IGNITE
ON TOP THE DEMONIC SYMBOLS!



A BIGGER
DEMON!

YOU
SUMMONED ME!
WHAT IS YOUR
WISH?











BUT JAYSAN DOES
HAVE HIS DOUBTS.

I'LL HAVE TO
MAKE SURE I'LL
MAKE ANOTHER
OFFERING SO BIG
I'LL HAVE
TO WIN!



THE NEXT DAY AT REHEARSAL.

EVEN THOUGH
IT'S EVERY MAN FOR
HIMSELF, GOOD LUCK,
JAYSAN! I--WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?

ER, I'M
AN ARTIST IN MY
SPARE TIME AND THIS
IS A GOOD LUCK
SYMBOL I LIKE
TO DRAW!



HEY, WHATEVER! IT'S
KINDA ODD, BUT IF IT
WORKS FOR YOU--



WHOMP!

ACCCK!









I'M GOING TO BE A FINALIST BUT TO MAKE SURE I WIN, I'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHO WOULD MAKE THE GREATEST SACRIFICE POSSIBLE TO MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE!



SURE ENOUGH, WHEN THE LAST TWO FINALISTS ARE ANNOUNCED, ONE OF THEM IS...

YAHYY!!
WHOO-HOO!!
JAYSAN!!

---JAYSAN!

THE AUDIENCE LOVES ME!



MAYBE I CAN WIN ON MY OWN WITHOUT ANY MODE DEMONIC HELP!



WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE FINALISTS, BLYMON?

AN UTTER TRAVESTY! WE'VE SEEN SOME REAL TALENT GET VOTED OFF IN FAVOR OF THAT CATERWALLING BANSHEE, JAYSAN! IF HE WINS, IT'LL BE A NEW LOW FOR MUSICAL STANDARDS!

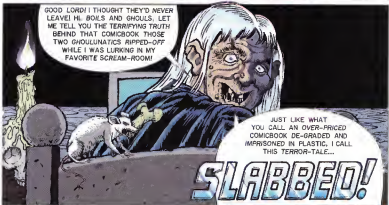
I WOULD WIN IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT ROWELL ALWAYS BAD-MOUTHING ME! HE JUST VOTED HIMSELF AS TOP FINALIST FOR THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE THAT WILL ASSURE MY VICTORY!

ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE FINAL SHOW, JAYSAN ARRANGES A MEETING WITH SYMON.











NO! PLEASE!
PLEASE! I'M
BEGGING YOU!

DEDDICK! GIVE
IT BACK! IT'S MY
FAVORITE, MOST
VALUABLE COMIC
EVER!

BEWARE EVIL-
DOERS! WE'RE
COMING FOR
YOU! THEN
IT'LL BE
JUST US!

WHAT COMIC?
I DON'T SEE ANY
COMIC! YOU MUST
BE DREAMING!







RICO? Y-Y-
YOU'RE HERE
ALREADY?

YEAH.

IS MY
MONEY HERE,
TOO?



N-N-NOT YET
BUT I'M ON MY WAY
TO S-S-SELL THIS!

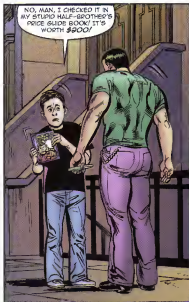
JUST HIS
LEAGUE #1.
BIE' NICE.



BUT THAT THING
LOOKS LIKE IT'S
BEEN READ
A LOT.

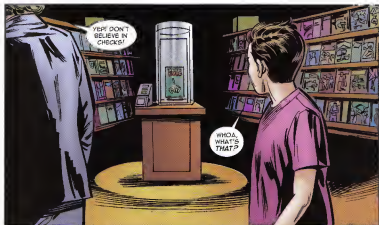
AIN'T WORTH SO
MUCH IF IT'S BEEN
READ A LOT, SOME-
THING COMES OFF
THE PRICE.

WHICH MEANS
I MAY HAVE TO
TAKE SOMETHING
OFF YOU.

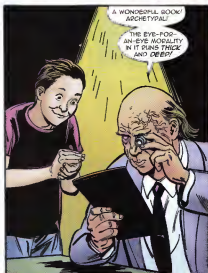




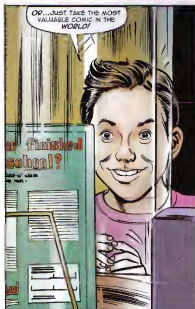








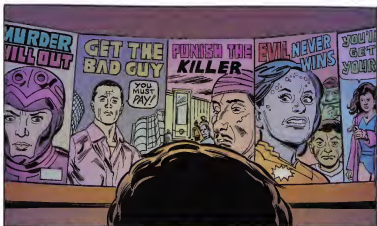














IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
THAT WAS THE OLD
MAN'S FACE!



IT'S SOME KIND
OF TRICK!



THAT'S NOT A WALL!
IT'S SOME KIND OF
PLASTIC!





AFTER A LIFETIME OF COLLECTING
HEROES, I FINALLY FIGURED IT WAS
TIME TO COLLECT A FEW VILLAINS
TO BALANCE THINGS!

IT'D NO
IDEA HOW EASY
IT WOULD BE!

HA-HA-HA-
HA!



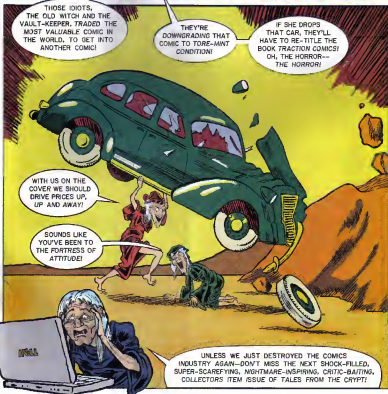
THE END



YOU KNOW, KIDDIES, IT'S JUVENILE DELINQUENTS SUCH AS DERRICK THAT GIVE COMICS A REALLY BAD NAME!

OH, NO! WHAT'S THIS?!

HELL



THOSE IDIOTS, THE OLD WITCH AND THE VAULT-KEEPER, TRADED THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC IN THE WORLD, TO GET INTO ANOTHER COMIC!

THEY'RE DOWNGRADING THAT COMIC TO TORE-MINT CONDITION!

IF SHE DROPS THAT CAR, THEY'LL HAVE TO RE-TITLE THE BOOK TRACTION COMICS! OH, THE HORROR--- THE HORROR!

WITH US ON THE COVER WE SHOULD DRIVE PRICES UP, UP AND AWAY!

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN TO THE FORTRESS OF ATTITUDE!

UNLESS WE JUST DESTROYED THE COMICS INDUSTRY AGAIN--DON'T MISS THE NEXT SHOCK-FILLED, SUPER-SCAREFYING, NIGHTMARE-INSPIRING, CRITIC-BAITING, COLLECTORS ITEM ISSUE OF TALES FROM THE CRYPT!



Salutations, you CRAZED CONSUMERS of PUTRID PAPER-CUTZ PUBLICATIONS! Time once again for our VICIOUS VERBAL exchanges, regarding our previous phantasmaGORYcal issues!

But first, here's the SHOCKING results of the voting on *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* #2! "THE TENANT" by Neil Kleid and Steve Mazzoni just narrowly beat out "THE GARDEN" by Fred Van Lente and Mr. Essex as BEAST, er, best story!

For any of you FOOLISH FRIGHT-FANS who missed our first two TERROR-FILLED issues, I've got good news for you! Our GREEDY publishers have rushed paperback and hardcover books into print collecting most of those stories — they're cleverly called *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* #1 "Ghouls Gone Wild!" and it's on sale now at BOOKSTORES everywhere! There's even an all-new TERROR-TALE by Don McGregor and Sho Murase called "RUNWAY ROADKILL!" that's to DIE for!

Subject: Tales from the Crypt!

It's hard to put into words exactly how happy I was to discover that PaperCutz is publishing new TFIC comics (and I am NOT a comic book person). I was always a huge fan of the show, but have never had the good fortune to get my hands on one of the comics. So I settled for perceiving the guys at my local comic store (monthly) for anything similar. I managed to find a compilation of "The House of Mystery," but hungered for more. Today, I got it. And I'm stoked I am dying (ha ha) for the next issue to hot the stands. Thanks so much for resurrecting this awesome comic. I'll be with you guys till the end.

Natalie Vazquez,
Puerto Rico

Just wait the end, Natalie? What kind of fickle fan are you?

Subject: New Tales From the Crypt Comics

Hallo, I am writing in regards to your new Tales From the Crypt comicbook series. While I appreciate your efforts to revive such a quality publication, I feel that you are going about it incorrectly. You say that you want to keep true to the original, yet you've toned down the content to such a degree, that it doesn't even resemble the horrors from half a century ago. Even though it may seem somewhat tame now, back in the day, Tales from the Crypt was considered very edgy and gory. Had it not been for the atmosphere at the time, it would have been even more visceral! Now, standards are such that you can get away with putting a lot more violent content in comicbooks. By toning down the blood, you are not only abiding by standards that are over half a century old, but you are being less gory than even the original comics were!

I also feel that you do not understand the way Tales from the Crypt "shock" endings work. You acknowledge and utilize shock at the end, but not in the way they were intended. You can't just have some random twist at the end, it has to have a social message to it (a "perisidy"). Additionally, the end is typically met with a bloody surprise. This final panel is met with a narrative box that describes the gore-shock in great detail, which gives the reader a better description and creates a sense of uneasiness.

Now, we have to talk about the artwork. I don't expect you to mimic the realistic noir-esque panels of the original to a tee, but at least give it a shot. Your artwork in these new comics doesn't even look remotely realistic. It looks like something out of a damn Nickelodeon cartoon!

In closing, I would like to ask you to please reconsider your new vision of these comics or discontinue them and let the crypt rest peacefully while you concentrate on Nancy Drew or something.

Nathan Wakefield

I feel your pain, Nathan. Unfortunately, I'm stuck with Sallcrap as editor!

Subject: TFC Stories

I've read some of the comments about the art seeming like it's geared more towards young children. And while I somewhat agree with that... the stories are quite good and very mature! I thought that they were very nostalgic of the classic EC Tales from The Crypt comics. In the last issue I really enjoyed "The Garden," it kept me guessing all the way 'til the end. But "The Tenant" was definitely my favorite. It really reminded me of the typical 'Poetic Justice' that was often dealt from the old Tales from The Crypt stories.

CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE!!

Jeremy Seth Brauner
Tustin, CA

No need to wait, Jeremy—it's here!

Subject: smiling to you, dear

My dear friend, I am poetry and passionate Ukrainian woman, but I am lonely. My heart dies without love as beautiful flower dies without water. I need to love and to be beloved as rose needs to be watered every day. I need kisses and love as no flower can live without sunny rays. Waiting for your response.

Joel

Get back to me after you die, Joel! (Got to get a new spam-filter!)

Subject: Thanks for renaming the greatest comic of all time.

Hi, I've been a fan of Tales from the Crypt for a long time now. Too young for the initial run, but I read a bunch of the reprints, and watched the show. I just finished the new issue #2, and have to say the new comics completely and totally lived up to the originals, the stories are just as creepy, and the art is just completely fabulous. My only complaint is that there is no possibility to get a subscription to "TFC." Just leaving my opinion, and asking if you are going to also revive the "Vault of Horror" and "Haunt of Fear"? Thanks,

A Fan

An interesting query, Al! What do the rest of you EC Fan-Addicts think?

As for subCRIPTIONs, just send us a check or money order, in US funds only, for \$24.00 for a one-year, six-issue subscription to TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Subscriptions begin with the next issue published after we receive your order.

Subject: Keep up the good work!

Hey, I'd just like to say that I LOVE YOUR TALES FROM THE CRYPT COMICS!! I still love the originals, but these are easier for me to read (I'm 13). The artwork is semi-good in "The Garden" though. My favorite comic so far was in issue #2 called "The Tenant." Keep up the terror-ific work! Thank you to the people and my favorite dead-wood star, The Crypt-Keeper! I am in love with the HBO series but most defiantly the comics! I grew up with them since my parents are horror fiend-itis! Love the comics and love the gore!

Maggot Kisses,
Lesley

Thanks, Lesley! If we haven't rotted your young mind yet, maybe we will next issue!

That's all for now! Don't miss TALES FROM THE CRYPT #4—featuring virtual madness by Neil Kleid and Chris North entitled "Extra Life" and a prescient preachy by Dun McGregor, James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook called "Crystal Clear!"

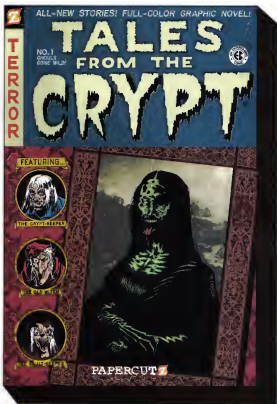
And keep those emails and letters coming, kiddies! Tell us what you thought of this teratoid, yet transcendental third issue. Send your letters to:

The Crypt-Keeper's Corner
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005

Or email your critical commentaries to our egomaniacal editor at: sallcrap@papercrete.com.

E.C. FANS!

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